

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 BIB-01 (ISO) W

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R 301355Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4073

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0190

BELGRADE FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PROP, PEPR, SOPN, CSCE, BU, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH CALLED TO TASK BY BULGARIANS OVER BBC BROADCAST

1. IN LATE DECEMBER THE BULGARIAN-LANGUAGE SERVICE OF THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION (BBC) CARRIED, REPORTEDLY FOR FOUR DAYS RUNNING, DISCUSSION AND COMMENTARY ON CONTEMPORARY BULGARIAN MATTERS BY DEFECTORS VLADIMIR AND NATALIA KOSTOV, GEORGI DIMOTROV BIOGRAPER PETAR SEMERDZHIEV, AND EXILE AUTHOR GEORGI MARKOV, ALL OF WHOSE WORK HAS BEEN BROADCAST ON RFE.

2. ON JANUARY 16, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER MARIYA ZAKHARIEVA CALLED IN BRITISH AMBASSADOR JOHN CLOAKE AND, SPEAKING IN CONTEXT OF CSCE, COMPLAINED ABOUT BROADCASTS AS CONSTITUTING INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF BULGARIA. CLOAKE RESPONDED WITH USUAL DISCLAIMER THAT BBC CALLS ITS OWN TUNE BUT ADDED THAT HE WOULD REPORT GOB'S COMPLAINT
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TO LONDON. HE DID, WITH RECOMMENDATION TO LONDON THAT NO ACTION BE TAKEN NOR FORMAL RESPONSE MADE TO GOB AT THIS TIME. ON SUBSEQUENT SOCIAL OCCASION, ZAKHARIEVA'S COMPLAINT WAS REPEATED IN STRONGER TERMS BY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOURTH DEPARTMENT HEAD LYUBEN GOTSEV, WHO SAID HE WOULD TAKE "NO RESPONSIBILITY" FOR RESULTS IF SUCH ATTACKS ON BULGARIA, INCLUDING PERSONAL CRITICISM

OF HEAD-OF-STATE TODOR ZHIVKOV, CONTINUED, WHICH BRITISH
EMBASSY HERE PERCEIVED AS LOW-KEY THREAT TO JAM THE BBC.

3. COMMENT: MATTER IS REMINISCENT BOTH OF FOREIGN
MINISTER MLADENOV'S 1977 COMPLAINTS TO THEN-AMBASSADOR
HERZ ABOQI CONTENT OF RFE BROADCASTS AND RECENT TEMPORARY JAMMING
OF VOA. BRITISH EMBOFFS BELIEVE GOB IS BLUFFING ON
VEILED THREAT TO JAM BBC, PARTICULARLY WITH BLEGRADE CSCE
CONFERENCE UNDERWAY AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS PRACTICALLY NO
INFLUENCE OVER CONTENT OF BBC BROADCASTS IN ANY CASE, IF THEY
DID WISH TO WARN BBC OFF.
GARTHOFF

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Message Attributes

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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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